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SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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- [1](#). Secretary Rice to Israel, West Bank
- [2](#). July 21 London Bombings

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Key stories in the media:  
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Israel Radio reported that at mid-day today, following her meeting with PM Sharon at his Sycamore Ranch, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reiterated that the

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U.S. views the disengagement move as an important step, and that she repeated President Bush's commitment to provide financial assistance for the Galilee and the Negev. Ha'aretz's web site cited the satisfaction of Sharon's bureau over the Rice-Sharon talks. The radio also cited a report from Beirut that Secretary Rice will make an impromptu visit to Lebanon today.

Jerusalem Post quoted sources close to Sharon as saying that his talks with Secretary Rice would center on both the run-up to disengagement, as well as "the day after." The leading Internet news service Ynet quoted GOI sources as saying, on the eve of Rice's visit, that American criticism should be directed at the Palestinians, who continue not to act against terror. Yediot reported that Secretary Rice told Shalom upon her arrival in Israel that coordinating the disengagement is critical and that it must be continued, because some people will try to disrupt it. Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post and other leading media reported that Secretary Rice told FM Silvan Shalom that the road map must be next on the agenda after the disengagement. She was also quoted as saying that the first step is a Palestinian commitment to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure. Leading media quoted Secretary Rice as saying that the U.S. hopes to convene

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a regional conference after disengagement to promote the establishment of relations between Israel and North African and Persian Gulf Countries. Jerusalem Post writes that the planned conference would be under the patronage of both the U.S. and Russia, and would also deal with various regional projects

Ha'aretz and other media quoted sources in Sharon's bureau as saying that they rejected Thursday a proposal by Vice Premier Shimon Peres and Vice PM Ehud Olmert that the disengagement be moved up. Maariv reported that PA Chairman [President] Mahmoud Abbas recently conveyed a secret message to Israel, which says that it is obvious that only some refugees will be able to return to Israel. Maariv reported that Abbas's adviser Jibril Rajoub has promised that there will be no terrorist attacks until and during the disengagement.

The media (lead story in Ha'aretz) quoted military sources as saying on Thursday that security forces were unable to hermetically seal off the Gaza Strip. The IDF believes that approximately 600 non-residents have entered the area to join anti-pullout force since the closure on the Strip was imposed on July 13. Maariv cited settlers' claims that 2,000 Israelis have infiltrated the Strip. All media quoted PM Sharon as saying Thursday, during a visit to the West Bank settlement city of Ariel, that the Ariel bloc will "forever be an integral part of the

state of Israel, and will have a contiguous territorial link to Israel. As will the other blocs." Jerusalem Post quoted a senior official in Sharon's office as saying he doubted that Sharon's tour to Ariel and the comments he made there would be viewed in Washington as "provocative." The source was quoted as saying that one of the issues to be discussed would be Israel's request for USD 2.2 billion in US aid over the next four years to pay for development in the Negev and Galilee and for moving the IDF bases out of Gaza.

Ha'aretz and Israel Radio quoted the UN's Middle East envoy Alvaro de Soto as saying that the disengagement plan could help jump-start the peace process. The radio and Maariv's web site reported that The UN Security Council rejected a request Thursday by Palestinian Foreign Minister Nasser al-Kidwa to debate the West Bank security fence, saying the Gaza disengagement plan trumps all other issues in the region at the moment.

Jerusalem Post reported that the Yesha Council of Jewish Settlements in the Territories plans to renew its attempt to march to Gush Katif next week.

Jerusalem Post reported that IDF soldiers from the infantry's noncommissioned officers course participated in a recent NATO exercise in Ukraine, the first time field troops have ever trained with the force.

Maariv reported in its lead story that the IDF's Intelligence branch has recently presented an operational plan against Al-Qaida. However, the newspaper quoted IDF Intelligence head Maj. Gen. Aharon Zeevi-Farkash as saying in closed meetings that his organization does not believe that Israel is in the sights of Al-Qaida.

All media reported on the acts of terrorism carried out in London on Thursday.

French President Jacques Chirac was quoted as saying in an interview with Ha'aretz that if European negotiators with Iran fail to eliminate the threat of nuclear proliferation, then the issue will have to be moved to the UN Security Council.

Yediot and Maariv reported that 110,000 people worldwide won "green cards" in the 2005 lottery, including 116 Israelis.

Yediot bannered a Mina Zemach (Dahaf Institute) poll conducted this week, with emphasis on the views of young Israelis aged 15-18:  
-55 percent of young Israelis are opposed to the disengagement; 44 percent support it.  
-64 percent of young Israelis support soldiers' refusal to evacuate settlements; 29 percent believe it is not legitimate.  
-58 percent of the adult public support the disengagement plan (unchanged from last week's poll); 35 percent are opposed (unchanged from last week's poll); 7 percent are undecided (12 percent in last week's poll).

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**1. Secretary Rice to Israel, West Bank:**  
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**Summary:**  
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Independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized:  
"Rice's visit at this time illustrates the increasing recognition by the international community that the success of the plan, conceived as unilateral, will create a diplomatic horizon of hope for the future."

Editor-in-Chief David Horovitz wrote in conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: "Ugly protests will push mainstream [Israeli public] sympathy away from the anti-pullout camp."

Deputy Managing Editor and extreme right-wing columnist Caroline B. Glick wrote in Jerusalem Post: "The time has come for the people of Israel to freely and democratically decide which side they are on."

**Block Quotes:**  
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**I. "Success in the First Test"**

Independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (July 22): "At the same time that the settlers' march was being stopped [on the way to the Gaza Strip], the Knesset rejected by a large majority a delay in

disengagement. The Qassam rockets, which threatened a renewal of fighting with the Palestinians on the eve of the evacuation, was defused by successful military and diplomatic pressure on the Palestinian Authority's leadership, without the IDF having to make good on its threat to open a ground offensive. All these elements provide a convenient backdrop for the arrival of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.... In the time

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left before disengagement, the U.S. must bridge the gaps between Israel and the PA regarding the gaps between Israel and the PA regarding control of the land crossings, and the opening of an air and sea port. The U.S. must also encourage PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas to continue his struggle against Hamas and to ensure quiet in Gaza during the evacuation.... Rice's visit at this time illustrates the increasing recognition by the international community that the success of the plan, conceived as unilateral, will create a diplomatic horizon of hope for the future."

## II. "Marching on 'Disengagement II'"

Editor-in-Chief David Horowitz wrote in conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (July 22): "As things stand, if civil disobedience is disciplined from now on, it will be a thick-skinned prime minister, and only one who has won explicit public support for his campaign, who will order further unilateral pullbacks in the West Bank.... Whether or not Sharon would want to oversee a significant 'Disengagement II,' it is near impossible to conceive of him attempting to do so from within the Likud.... Meanwhile Labor, whose leaders are certainly capable of ordering a major unilateral pullout from the West Bank, is plain unelectable.... Opinion-poll fluctuations in recent weeks ... underline the volatility of the mainstream Israeli public mood. Ugly protests will push mainstream sympathy away from the anti-pullout camp.... A sufficient swing of support might even prompt the oft-anticipated 'Big Bang' in Israeli politics -- the realignment of our parties along lines that more effectively represent the new electoral segments."

## II. "The Settlers Show Their True Colors"

Deputy Managing Editor and extreme right-wing columnist Caroline B. Glick wrote in Jerusalem Post (July 22): "When a democratic government adopts an immoral policy, it is the duty of its loyal citizens, through acts of protest and civil disobedience, to hold up a mirror to their leaders and fellow citizens to force them to contend with the implications of their policies. At Netivot and Kfar Maimon this week, the protesters did just that. What we saw on the one side was the dignified, humble, and stubborn Zionism of the citizens set up to be expelled and of their supporters. On the other side, we saw the anti-democratic and discriminatory face of the government that stands against them. The time has come for the people of Israel to freely and democratically decide which side they are on."

## 12. July 21 London Bombings:

### Summary:

Foreign News Editor Arik Bachar wrote in popular, pluralist Maariv: "Judging from Britain's responses to the lethal bombings two weeks ago, the British are going to harvest much more experience, because it is not certain that they have grasped what hit them."

### Block Quotes:

#### "Jenin-on-Thames"

Foreign News Editor Arik Bachar wrote in popular, pluralist Maariv (July 22): "This time, London paid a cheap price. But reports from Her Majesty's capital are starting to smell the foulness of the Middle East, perhaps fitting a city whose Mayor feels such empathy for suicide bombers.... Judging from Britain's responses to the lethal bombings two weeks ago, the British are going to harvest much more experience, because it is not certain that they have grasped what hit them.... Even before Britain was able to bury all the casualties of the series of attacks, after a few days of national unity, its politicians started to argue over who among them was responsible for the terror. They are beating one another up, while talking in unison, extremely tactfully, about peace-seeking

Islam, in which the West's great cleverness and irresponsible policy succeeds in planting seeds of terror. Everybody is guilty, except the sheikhs who are welcomed in the West with pampering hugs, while they preach the enormity of its rot to their faithful."

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